

Heidelberg Castle was principally built (1556-1559); and it would not appear unlikely that it may have had an effect on English Art when we remember that the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I., held court here as Queen of Bohemia, at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

At the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, and during that of James I., English artists are numerous, and appear, with the exception of Jansen and Christmas, to have the field to themselves; consequently it is at this period that we expect to find a more decidedly native school. And, in fact, it is now that we meet with the names of English designers connected with such buildings (and with their concomitant decoration) as Audley End, Holland House, Wollaton, Knowle, and Burleigh.

Thus we may expect to meet with the purest Italian ornament in the works of the artists of Henry VIII.'s reign; and this will be found to be the case, not only on the subjects we have already mentioned, but in the examples given in Plate LXXXIII., Nos. 1 and 3. During Elizabeth's reign, we perceive but a slight imitation of Italian models, and a complete adoption of the style of ornament practised by the decorative artists of Germany and the Netherlands. In the reign of James I. we find the same style continued by English artists, but generally in a larger manner, as at Nos. 5 and 11, Plate LXXXIV., from Aston Hall, built at the latter part of his reign. There is little then, that can be justly termed original in the character of the ornament of this period, and it is simply a modification of foreign models. Even at the close of the fifteenth century may be seen the germs of the open scroll-work in many decorative works in Italy, such as stained glass and illuminated books. The beautifully executed ornamental borders, &c. of Giulio Clovio (1498-1578), pupil of Giulio Romano, present in many parts all the character of Elizabethan scroll, band, nail-head, and festoon work: the same may be remarked of the stained glass windows of the Laurentian Library, Florence, by Giovanni da Udine (1487-1561); and still more noticeable is it in the frontispieces of Serlio's great work on Architecture, published in Paris in 1515. As regards another main feature in Elizabethan ornament, viz. the complicated and fanciful interlaced bands, we must seek its origin in the numerous and excellent designs of the class of engravers known as the "petits maitres" of Germany and the Netherlands, and more particularly in those of Aldegrever, Virgilius Solis of Nuremberg, Daniel Hopfer of Augsburg, and Theodore de Bry, who sent forth to the world a great number of engraved ornamental designs during the sixteenth century. Nor should we forget to mention, at the close of this century, the very fanciful and thoroughly Elizabethan compositions, architectural and ornamental, of W. Dieterlin, which Vertue asserts were used by Christmas in his designs for the façade of Northumberland House. These were the principal sources from which the so-called Elizabethan style of ornament was mainly founded; and we may here remark, that whilst it is evident that decoration ought, and indeed in some cases must, vary in its character, according to the different subjects and materials on which it is applied, and whilst the Italian masters, recognising this æsthetical fact, did in most instances carefully abstain from carrying the pictorial style into sculptured and architectural works, confining it to its just limits, such as illuminated books, engravings, Damascene metal-work, and other purely ornamental subjects,—so, on the other hand, the artists employed in England during the period of which we treat carried the pictorial style of ornament into every branch of Art, and reproduced even on their buildings the unfettered fancies of the decorative artists as they received them through the medium of the engraver.

As regards the characteristics of Elizabethan ornament, they may be described as consisting chiefly of a grotesque and complicated variety of pierced scroll-work, with curled edges; interlaced bands, sometimes on a geometrical pattern, but generally flowing and capricious, as seen, for example, on No. 12, Plate LXXXIII., and Nos. 26 and 27, Plate LXXXIV.; strap and nail-head bands; curved and broken outlines; festoons, fruit, and drapery, interspersed with roughly-executed figures of human beings; grotesque monsters and animals, with here and there large and flowing designs of natural

branch and leaf ornament, as shown in No. 7, Plate LXXXIII., a noble example of which still exists also on the great gallery ceiling at Burton Agnes, in Yorkshire; rustications of ball and diamond work, paneled compartments often filled with foliage or coats-of-arms; grotesque arch stones and brackets are freely used; and the carving, whether in stone or wood, is marked by great boldness and effect, though roughly executed. Unlike the earliest examples of the Revival on the Continent, especially in France and Spain, these ornaments are not applied to Gothic forms; but the groundwork or architectural mass is essentially Italian in its nature (except in the case of windows): consisting of a rough application of the orders of architecture one over another, external walls with cornice and balustrade, and internal walls bounded with frieze and cornice, with flat or covered ceilings; even the gable ends, with their convex and concave outlines, so common in the style, were founded on models of the early Renaissance school at Venice.

The coloured patterns of diaper work—on wood, on the dresses of the monumental statues, and on tapestries,—show in most cases more justness and purity of design than the carved work: the colours, moreover, being rich and strongly marked. A great quantity of this kind of work, especially the arras, with which walls and furniture were constantly decorated, no doubt came from the looms of Flanders, and in some cases from Italy, since the first native factory of the kind was established at Mortlake in the year 1619.

Nos. 9, 10, 11, and 13, Plate LXXXV., are the most Italian in their character of the examples given; No. 13 being stated, indeed, to be the design of an Italian artist. Nos. 12, 14, and 16, also of a good Italian character, being taken from portraits of the time of Elizabeth and James I., are probably the work of Dutch or Italian artists. Nos. 1, 4, 5, 15, and 18, though in the Italian taste, are marked by much originality; whilst No. 6 and 8 are in the ordinary Elizabethan style. Fine examples of coloured ornament are still preserved in the pall belonging to the Ironmongers' Company, date 1515, the ground of which is gold, with a rich and flowing purple pattern; similar in every respect to the painted antependiums of several altars at Santo Spirito, Florence (fifteenth century), and probably of Italian manufacture.

At St. Mary's Church, Oxford, is preserved a rich pulpit hanging of gold ground with a blue pattern; and at Hardwicke Hall, Derbyshire, is a fine piece of tapestry of a yellow silk ground, with a crimson and gold thread pattern. But, perhaps, the most beautiful specimen of this kind of work is in the possession of the Saddlers' Company, a gold pattern on a crimson velvet pall,* made in the early part of the sixteenth century. Although in these we have referred to, and in the examples given in Plate LXXXV., two colours only are principally relied on for effect, yet in other subjects every variety of colour is freely used; gilding, however, being generally predominant over colour—a taste probably derived from Spain, where the discovery of gold in the New World led to an extravagant use of it as a means of decoration in the reigns of Charles V. and Philip II. An example of this style may be seen in the magnificent chimney-piece, with elaborate gilt carving combined with black marble, now preserved in the Governor's room at the Charter-house.

By the middle of the seventeenth century the more marked characteristics of the style had completely died out, and we lose sight, not without some regret, of that richness, variety, and picturesqueness; which, although deficient in good guiding principles, and liable to fall into straggling confusion, could not fail to impress the beholder with a certain impression of nobility and grandeur.

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* For these, see Shaw's very beautiful work on the "Arts of the Middle Ages."